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teachers than any preceding year. Probably nearly two hundred large and successful institutes were held in villages and cities throughout the country. Many enrolled more than five hundred students, usually spending weekly, first, one hour in attendance at a popular lecture on some aspect of religious education, and, second, dividing into classes on various technical aspects of this subject. A full account of the methods employed in organizing and conducting these institutes will be found in Professor Athearn's recent volume, *The City Institute for Religious Teachers*.

The secretary of the Methodist Sunday School in Topeka, Kansas, has compiled reports for five years showing the reason for every withdrawal from the school. Over one-half were on account of removal to another city. Only a little over 7 per cent could be classified as without good excuses. Of these, the largest number were in the adult department, the smallest number in the Senior department. This would seem to substantiate the theory held by some students of the school that the so-called leak at the beginning of adolescence is not nearly as serious as the loss which comes from lack of

system in transferring pupils from city to city, and still more from the lack of ability to work out a reasonable place for the adult in the school.

The Northern Baptist Convention has a highly efficient commission on moral and religious education which has already published a number of valuable pamphlets. The last two, Nos. 4 and 5, deal with the various systems of correlated Bible teaching and the study of religion with the work in public schools and with the home and family worship.

#### University Bible-Study Work

A very interesting summary has recently been made of the Bible-study work at the University of Pennsylvania. The total enrolment was 1,278. Weekly attendance was 748. The average number of weeks per group was more than 10. Altogether there were 70 groups of students, of which 23 were fraternities. There were 54 leaders of these various groups, of whom 22 were professors and only 7 were students. The experience of the University of Pennsylvania makes it evident that for successful Bible work in colleges a student leadership is less effective than that of more experienced men.

## CHURCH EFFICIENCY

### The Pacific Conference of the Asiatic Institute

The first Pacific conference to be held under the auspices of the Asiatic Institute will meet in San Francisco in connection with the Exposition, July 19-20. The American Historical Association and the two great universities of central California will co-operate with the Institute. The general topics for discussion will be:

July 19—Denison Memorial Day  
Subject: "The Pacific as the Theater of Two Civilizations"

- a) Exclusion in the Pacific Basin
- b) Ownership and Exploitation of Pacific Regions

- c) Armament and Military in the Pacific
- d) American-Asiatic Relations

July 20—Rockhill Memorial Day

Subject: "The Pacific Basin as the Theater of the World's Great Hereafter"

- e) Conditions of Future Peace in the Pacific
- f) National Policies in the Pacific
- g) Demands of Humanity in the Pacific
- h) Conflict of European Nations in the Pacific

### Progress toward Methodist Union

The Board of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church has unanimously accepted the overture for church unity made by the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

This means that the unification of all the Methodist bodies will be under serious consideration by the general Conference of 1916 and the indications are favorable that the general conferences of the various bodies will then carry the work of reorganization to a successful conclusion.

### **Pensioning Retired Ministers**

The matter of pensioning retired ministers is receiving the serious consideration of the larger Protestant religious bodies. Dr. Foulkes of the Presbyterian Board recently announced at a meeting in Chicago that the Presbyterian church has now a fund for this purpose of \$4,000,000, and is seeking to increase it in the immediate future by \$500,000. The Methodist church is raising a fund of \$10,000,000. The sum of \$200,000 was recently given to the Missionaries' and Ministers' Benefit Fund with a conditional gift of \$50,000.

### **Proposals for Efficiency among the Baptists**

One of the most important events of the Northern Baptist Convention held at Los Angeles, May 19-26, was the report of the Commission on Efficiency. This consisted chiefly in recommendations with respect to the Home Mission Society and the Publication Society. These have excited considerable interest and not a little criticism. The plan suggested, which is now before the Northern Baptist churches for consideration, involves a number of radical changes, looking toward consolidation of effort and economy and efficiency in administration. It is proposed that the Home Mission Society and the Publication Society be consolidated into one organization under the name of the American Baptist Home Mission and Publication Society, and that "such readjustment of the whole work be made as will group in distinct departments the lines of work which are analogous

and bring all the several departments into harmonious co-operation and mutual support."

It is also proposed that the editorial and publishing activity be carried on in Philadelphia and that the other departments be established in New York, but both to be amenable to one board of managers. The commissioners believe also that the removal of the headquarters of the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society from Boston to New York would be attended by beneficial results, but they make no recommendation for immediate action in this respect.

The report was not fully discussed in convention; there seemed, however, to be a feeling of distrust of the policy of concentration, of lessening rather than multiplying the points of contact with the denomination.

A question of like nature was discussed in the Southern Baptist Convention which met at Houston, Texas, May 12-19. The Efficiency Committee of that convention brought in a report recommending that no change be made for the present in the organization of the Home and Foreign Mission boards; the report concludes: "we are entirely at one in the view that until substantial unity of opinion is attained among us on so important a matter the consolidation of the Home and Foreign Mission boards be not recommended."

### **Baptist Negro Seminary**

At the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention at Houston, Texas, in May, it was agreed to raise \$50,000 for the establishment of a negro seminary at Memphis, Tennessee.

### **Union Theological Seminary and the General Assembly**

The question of the relations of the Presbyterian General Assembly to Union Theological Seminary was one of the important subjects discussed at the meetings of that assembly held in Rochester in May.

The assembly had appointed a committee in 1911 to consider the relations between the two bodies, with a view to re-establishing co-operation between them. This year the committee presented a 33-page report, dealing with the question from its legal, doctrinal, and ecclesiastical aspects.

The co-operative relation between the seminary and the Presbyterian church was practically destroyed by the action of the seminary in 1904-5 when the terms of subscription, both for professors and directors, were extended to include those who were outside of the Presbyterian confession.

The report of the legal section of the committee may be summarized as follows: The seminary was incorporated March 27, 1839, by act of the legislature of the state of New York. By that act the government of the seminary was vested in a board of 28 directors, one half to be clergymen, the other half laymen. This corporate body was given power to perpetuate the organization, and to enjoy entire control.

"The committee concludes that it was clearly intended that the fundamental purpose of the organization was to create and conduct a theological school which should prepare men for the ministry upon the doctrinal basis of the Westminster Confession of Faith and that the fundamental aim and design must be kept in mind in determining the limitations of the power of the directors."

In 1870 the seminary entered into an agreement with the General Assembly whereby the appointment of professors was to be subject to the confirmation of that assembly; but this act was clearly illegal, since the directors by their articles of corporation had no authority thus to limit their power of appointment. "The directors are legally bound to carry out the fundamental purposes of the institution, but they have no relations to the General Assembly, and the assembly has no control over the seminary."

The subcommittee on doctrinal questions concluded its report by saying "in brief, Union Seminary, in teaching, spirit, and by direct and formal act, has ceased to be theologically in any sense a Presbyterian institution as distinguished from any other denomination."

The effect of this separation between the seminary and the assembly cannot be forecast. In our opinion it will not be serious. Presbyterian graduates of the seminary will doubtless be ordained as formerly by the New York Presbytery, and will be called to Presbyterian churches throughout the country. Whether the number of such students will decrease will depend upon the attitude of the local churches. As that is approximately the present situation, it is hard to see why the seminary should be a serious loser.

#### **A Platform for the Country Church**

The *Presbyterian Advance* of May 27 prints the following platform for country churches. It came into being in connection with the discussions at the General Assembly this year. It furnishes an ideal worth striving for by every country church and pastor:

"Every church open every Lord's Day for the worship of God.

"The country church the center of all the interests of the community.

"A pastor in every Presbyterian church giving his whole time to the people who live on the farm or in the village.

"Good roads in the interest of the Kingdom of God, that there may be a way from house to house and from home to church and school in the country.

"Adequate schools in which men shall be taught to support the home, the school, and the church, and to supply satisfying improvements for the country community.

"The country church a friendly home of the farm renter, the farm hand, the young

people, and the aged in the community, and of any others tempted to move away, that the church may build around itself a happy and satisfied community.

"An adequate living income for the farmer who tills the soil, the schoolmaster who trains the mind, and the pastor who awakens the soul to eternal hopes, in order that life in the country may be satisfying now and may inspire a faith in Eternal life."

### **John Hus**

On July 6, 1915, the Protestant world will celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of the burning of John Hus. This memorial

is receiving much attention in the religious press of Europe and America.

To study the life of Hus, to see him in his time and surroundings, and to learn the inner meaning of the religious and political forces which were at work, both in the condemnation of Hus and the Hussite wars which followed, will be a wholesome intellectual and spiritual exercise for the ministry and laity today. Much can be learned for today from that troubled period.

The timely appearance of a comprehensive work on Hus by Professor David Schaff will be welcomed by those whose interest is aroused at this time.